



Unit 9: Visitor Attractions

Delivery guidance

Approaching the unit

Visitor attractions have an increasingly important role in the travel and tourism industry, as people have more disposable income and an increased amount of leisure time to spend it. With new markets and increasing wealth in numerous countries around the world (which will undoubtedly change during the lifetime of this qualification) learners have the opportunity to identify and explore the types of visitor attractions available, and how they meet visitor needs and expectations.

Ever-increasing markets create competition between different attractions. Learners will need to be able to appreciate the actions taken by different organisations in order to attract first-time visitors to their attraction and maintain them as repeat visitors, as well as how organisations fund themselves through external bodies, self-funding and revenue generation.

Learners will need to visit a range of visitor attractions first-hand to fully grasp this unit, and these should include, for example, a global attraction, and a more local or transient attraction, such as the Christmas markets in European cities and town centres.

They should also be able, where possible, to visit a built visitor attraction such as a heritage site, events such as a local festival and a natural attraction such as a national park. This is so they gain a full understanding of the wide range of attractions available and the high visitor numbers they attract. Learners should also be aware of the competition in the visitor attraction market and how these organisations need to keep their appeal through marketing and how they adapt and change to gain the competitive advantage and extend/maintain the longevity of their business.

Learners would benefit from meeting employees at visitor attractions. Many large visitor attractions offer educational talks or are willing to send guest speakers to discuss key issues with learners.

As we move into an increasingly digital age, learners will examine the role of modern technologies (e.g. mobile applications) and how these can meet the needs of the different types of visitors at a variety of attractions. This means that learners will require access to the internet on a regular basis in order to complete this unit.

Delivering the learning aims

Learning aim A

Learning aim A introduces the concept of visitor attractions and the variety of different types available. Learners will need to understand the different scales of operation and appeal of these attractions to a range of visitor types. They will also need an understanding of the key roles funding and income generation have in the success of an attraction. One way to deliver this would be to select a range of attractions (built, natural and events) that, between them, meet all the necessary criteria and try to visit these with learners (or set learners the task of visiting them personally if your setting allows for this). Selecting local examples may make it easier for learners to travel to the chosen attractions in their own time.

Learners will need to conduct online research to establish funding sources and also to investigate worldwide attractions, so you may wish to spend some time helping them with effective online search techniques (e.g. the best keywords to type into a search engine, as 'visitor attraction' is very broad and 'attraction' is likely to produce a number of irrelevant and possibly inappropriate returns!).

Learners will need to deliver a presentation to the group for this learning aim, so giving them

opportunities to practise presentations before their final delivery would be helpful. Some learners may find presenting a daunting prospect, so the more practice they have, the more likely they are to improve and build self-confidence for the assessment.

Learning aim B

Learning aim B focuses on how visitor attractions meet the diverse expectations of visitors. Learners will need to gain, ideally from first-hand experiences, an understanding of the products and services available at different visitor attractions and how these meet and exceed visitor expectations. They will need to examine the importance of technology for visitor attractions, and the different ways in which it is used; for example, to generate interest and enhance the visitor experience.

Learners will need to have in-depth knowledge of two contrasting visitor attractions to meet the assessment criteria for this task, so it is essential that they visit their chosen attractions and are able to research them online.

Learning aim C

Learners will need to explore how visitor attractions respond to competition and how they measure their success and appeal. Guest speakers, where possible (or perhaps question and answer sessions on Skype), together with visits to local attractions, will assist with this learning aim; for example, to discuss how they capture data on their visitors. While overall visitor numbers are available and published for some visitor attractions, a more detailed analysis of visitor types and trends may be more difficult without specific input from organisations. Some of this information may be sensitive and it would be useful to establish close links with local attractions. Learners will need to explore the strategies used by two different visitor attractions to respond to competition. Learners will need access to internet sources to research data relating to their chosen organisations and locations and to recognise the importance of data analysis.



Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Investigate the nature, role and appeal of visitor attractions	A1 Types of visitor attractions A2 Scale, scope and appeal of visitor attractions A3 Ways in which visitor attractions are funded A4 Importance of additional revenue generation strategies for visitor attractions	A presentation, with speaker notes, that examines the different types of visitor attractions, showing why they appeal to visitors and how they are funded, and evaluates the importance of visitor attractions in generating additional revenue.
B Examine how visitor attractions meet the diverse expectations of visitors	B1 Different types of visitors and their diverse expectations B2 Products and services provided, including primary and secondary spend opportunities B3 Ways to meet and exceed visitor expectations B4 Use of technology and its importance for visitor attractions	An article that explores how the two different visitor attractions selected offer products and services and use technology to meet and exceed visitor expectations.
C Explore how visitor attractions respond to competition and measure their success and appeal	C1 Strategies for responding to competition C2 Success and appeal, using statistics to measure visitor trends and visitor numbers	A report that explores how two selected visitor attractions respond to competition and the importance of effectively measuring their success and appeal.

Assessment guidance

The recommended assessment of this unit is through three internally assessed assignments. Assignments are holistic for this qualification, so tasks should not prescribe pass, merit or distinction criteria, but allow learners to achieve all the criteria by completing the task in full.

This unit requires close supervision of the visitor attractions selected by learners to form part of their assignment tasks. Learners should be encouraged to be independent; however, it is recommended that assessors check that learner choice will allow access to all of the assessment criteria in this unit. The same two contrasting visitor attractions can be used for all assessments if preferred.

Learning aim A requires learners to present findings relating to two organisations. Learners must ensure their organisations are sufficiently different to meet the criteria and are not two built attractions, for instance. This will enable them to access all of the assessment criteria, including merit and distinction. To achieve the higher grades, learners need to be using current statistical data, so learners should first briefly search for this information to ensure it is readily available before making a final decision on which organisations to use. Learners will be presenting their information, so step-by-step observation records will need to be created by the assessor to back up the learner's work.

Learning aim B focuses on the differing needs of visitors and how they are met both at the attraction and through the use of technology. It is suggested that learners write an article for the assessment evidence, so they need enough information to be able to write at some length. Again, it is essential that the two chosen attractions meet the criteria, especially for the technology element of this learning aim.

Learning aim C is about how two organisations respond to competition and how they measure their success and appeal. It is therefore essential that learners choose organisations with obvious competitors in order to complete this task fully. Learners will need to show awareness of how organisations use data analysis, and access/reference to some data will be needed to support their evidence.



Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 9: Visitor Attractions

Introduction

Ask learners to think about and choose one visitor attraction they have visited and enjoyed. Ask them to make a list of all the reasons why their experience was a positive one. Then ask learners to pair up with someone else in the class to see if they came up with similar reasons. Lead a class discussion with the whole group to try and agree what makes a successful visitor attraction.

Ask learners to consider the following: 'Do you think the visitor attraction has changed its products and services in recent years and are you able to give some reasons why?' (Hopefully they will come up with improved technology, maintaining a competitive advantage, keeping up with competitors etc.)

Learning aim A: Investigate the nature, role and appeal of visitor attractions

- For content area A1, show learners a range of different types of attraction, e.g. photos or images, and ask them to sort them into the following categories: built, natural and events.
- For content area A2, use the same images as in content area A1, and ask learners to name as many attractions from the images as possible. Try to ensure there is a range of cultural, worldwide, European sporting and religious attractions within the photo selection. Are they international, national, regional or local attractions? Learners should give their reasons.
- Ask learners: 'Who owns visitor attractions?' Use the images from the previous activity and ask learners to identify whether the organisations are under voluntary/not-for-profit, public or private ownership. Learners should then identify definitions for the three ownership types through online research.
- Ask learners to find a diagram that shows what the economic multiplier effect is. You may need to supply this if research facilities are not available (see the resources section). Ask learners to explain this diagram in relation to a planned new visitor attraction. What other elements will the visitor attraction need to be successful (labour, food, drinks, construction, facilities, etc.)? What effect will this have on the local and national (primary, secondary) economy in the area and further afield.
- Lead a discussion about how visitor attractions maintain visitor interest. Ask learners to select a new ride at a local or regional theme park and explore why this will encourage repeat business (see the resources section). What developments could a visitor attraction introduce? How could an attraction diversify? Select an area of regeneration to show learners how creating attractions can help improve an area and attract tourists
- Depending on the class size, ask learners, individually or in small groups, to select a familiar visitor attraction (a different one each if possible). Ask them to research the visitor attraction and produce a factsheet with details such as: how far away it is; how much it costs individuals, groups and concessions; its facilities; two ways to get there (transport); current promotional offers or discounts. Transfer information from the factsheets onto a chart you have pre-prepared on the whiteboard.

- Ask learners which attractions they would visit this coming weekend. Ask them questions such as: 'What obstacles are there to you visiting this weekend?' Discuss how some factors are significant barriers to some people and how certain features make the attraction more appealing.
- Finally, ask learners: 'Why is our capital city more popular with visitors than a regional city? What does it have that other destinations do not?' Learners should gather their ideas, working as a group.
- For content area A3, ask learners to work in small groups and ask them to research and create a factsheet on organisations that may provide funding for visitor attractions. Ask learners to include information about what the organisation does, and provide details about one funding project of a visitor attraction the organisation has been associated with. Each group should research one of the following: the national government department responsible for tourism, the European Union, UNESCO and the Global Heritage Fund, a national charity or trust. Ask learners to report to the group and share the information from their factsheet (developing their presentation skills as needed for learning aim A assignment and literacy/report writing skills for learning aim B). Depending on the local situation, accessing this information may be too challenging, in which case you could present a slideshow of the key points.
- Ask learners to consider attractions funded from charitable or educational trusts, and those attractions funded only through income gained from visitors and secondary spend. Lead a discussion: 'How does the source of funding affect a visitor attraction, e.g. its size and ability to attract repeat visitors?'
- For content area A4, ask learners to select a familiar visitor attraction and research new strategies such as:
 - novelty events and exhibitions
 - offering or expanding on-site accommodation
 - new merchandising initiatives
 - venue hire initiatives.
- Where possible, learners should research what income the organisation has generated prior to and after the new strategy to see if there is any difference. If it is not possible to obtain financial data, learners could research to see if visitor numbers have increased, or to look for other indicators that may reflect how successful the new strategy was. Ask learners to identify why this revenue generation strategy is important to the business, or potentially is important to the business for the future, and then share their findings among the group.

Learning aim B: Examine how visitor attractions meet the diverse expectations of visitors

For content area B1, learners should consider different types of visitors and how their expectations differ when visiting attractions. You could approach this by organising learners into the role of a type of visitor and giving them a list of facilities available at visitor attractions. Ask learners to rank these in order of importance according to what their visitor type will want, remembering that the facilities can be mundane (e.g. high chairs, toilets, food outlets) or more specific (e.g. dress codes, language choice, healthy food options). This list is not exhaustive, and hopefully learners will appreciate that expectations will vary between different groups. Learners should ensure they have looked at the key areas of expectations in the unit specification, content area B1: accessibility; cost and convenience; safety and security; entertainment and education/information – provision of a learning environment.

- For content area B2, ask learners to work in pairs and select a visitor attraction they can research easily online. Ask each member of the pair to select a visitor type that is different from their partner. Then ask each learner to create a leaflet guide for their chosen attraction, which must outline, only as relevant for their needs, the products and services on offer, the relevant support services and primary and secondary spend opportunities. Learners can use ideas from the unit content area B2 of the specification. Each learner must consider how each aspect suits the needs of their chosen visitor type. Then, ask learners to compare each other's leaflet and identify the different perspectives that a different visitor type can give to these aspects of the visitor attraction. Ask each pair to share their findings with the rest of the class. Can the group determine anything relating to this, especially for similar visitor types at different attractions? Are the needs and desires of the visitor types the same



regardless of the visitor attraction chosen, or does the visitor attraction offer different experiences for the differing types of visitors? Discuss this with learners to identify which is more important to develop an understanding of the concepts: products, services, support services or primary and secondary spends.

- Content area B3 focuses on ways to meet and exceed visitor expectations. Learners can research a variety of different visitor attractions by finding pictures and/or company websites online and explain why they may appeal to visitors. Use a map or satellite image package to look at the location and environment surrounding the attraction. How does this have an impact on the visitor attraction? Why might a visitor attraction choose to improve their surroundings?
- Select a local visitor attraction (and, if possible, visit it). Then ask learners to use the organisation's website to view the new products, facilities and services that have been developed to encourage repeat visitors. Why do some attractions diversify? Ask learners to research ways that visitor attractions have diversified and identify examples. Discuss the reasons for diversification.
- You will need to have started collecting newspapers (these can be local or national) in advance. Ask learners to search the newspapers for adverts and promotional offers for visitor attractions. Lead a class discussion around their findings and ask them to research further.
- Learners should try to establish whether the organisations they have been researching offer free Wi-Fi and how they find this out. What offers or discounts can they find for their chosen organisation? When and why do organisations offer these?
- For content area B4, use a stopwatch or similar to time how long it takes learners to go online and buy one standard ticket to their organisation (centre facilities allowing). Stop the stopwatch when the payment screen comes up (i.e. do not let learners actually buy a ticket!). How long did it take? Was the process easy? Why have visitor attractions made online booking so easy, and what benefits does it have for the organisation? Ask learners to think about outdoor attractions and consider why advance booking is particularly advantageous for them. How can good online facilities provide an attraction with a competitive edge? Learners can also access the organisation's mobile application (app) and consider whether or not this technology adds value to the organisation.
- Learners should re-examine the attraction used in content area B3 and identify the technological features such as types of interactive displays the attraction provides for visitor use. Learners should then analyse the value that they add to the organisation. Who do they appeal to, and why are they important?
- Using the same organisation, learners should consider how technology is used by employees, and how they interact using it. Lead a discussion on how different technologies help to manage visitors, especially at busy times or on large sites. Can technology be used by organisations to reduce their costs?

Learning aim C: Explore how visitor attractions respond to competition and measure their success and appeal

- For content area C1, as a group activity load a review site and find a review thread for a visitor attraction of your choice. Ask learners to consider how reliable and representative the reviews are. Who comments on review sites the most and why? Can they be trusted or not?
- Ask learners to consider the impact of reliable market research for an organisation. How can they find out about the types of visitors to their attraction, length of stay, average spend, satisfaction levels and repeat visitors? What are the aims and objectives of this research?
- Ask learners to work in small groups, select a visitor attraction and identify its main competitor(s). What is the attraction doing well? How does it need to adapt its products/services/facilities to respond to competition? Each group should make a short presentation to the class to explain how their attraction could respond to competition. You can use a table like the one below and ask learners to consider the following:
- Where possible, invite a guest speaker from a local visitor attraction to discuss the types of data they capture relating to their visitors and how they use this to measure success and respond to competition

Attraction:	
Target market(s)	
Main competitors	
Appropriate diversification strategies	
Appropriate marketing strategies	
Personalised target marketing	
Products and services that lead to a memorable visitor experience	

(organisations are unlikely to share specific data and commercially sensitive information).

- Choose a well-known theme park, for example, Disneyland Paris. How has it maintained its profile in the marketplace? Investigate its regular (annual) events and how it can manage seasonality within its brand in the weather of Northern Europe. Learners should create this as a factsheet showing the regular events and the elements/events per season (spring, summer, autumn, winter) along with their purpose to the organisation in maintaining its profits and place within the marketplace.
- For the same organisation, ask learners to suggest a new event for the season that has the lowest number of visitors. Why would this appeal to visitors, and what would its success criteria be?
- For content area C2, look at overall UK visitor numbers by attraction from the VisitBritain website (or similar website in your country) (see the resources section). Discuss the results and ask learners to consider the trends shown (this is likely to vary in the lifetime of this qualification).
- Indicators of success and appeal or a selected organisation, ask learners to consider, other than visitor numbers, what other indicator of success and appeal is the most important for their organisation and why. This involves learners identifying which one of the following is the most important and the other two are less important and justifying their choice:
 - increased employment – seasonal or all year round
 - increased investment, development and/or infrastructure



- regeneration of areas and improved local services and facilities.
- Learners can use a chart like the one below to list the advantages and disadvantages of different types of data available to present and analyse data to show the success and appeal of attractions:

	An example (could be a link or an image)	Pros	Cons
Spreadsheets showing visitor numbers, trends, spend			
Graphs showing visitor numbers, trends, spend			
Pie charts showing visitor numbers, trends, spend			
Surveys			
Questionnaires			
Break-even analysis			
Monitoring through electronic turnstiles			
Annual reports			

- Ask learners to consider what would happen if organisations failed to measure and analyse their success and appeal. Create posters using A2 size paper, with the following headings: Launch of marketing campaigns; Sponsorship; Regeneration; Investment and development of new products; Investment and development of new services; Maintaining image; and Reputation. Learners need to research an occasion when each of these has gone wrong for an organisation (e.g. ride failure resulting in negative publicity, sponsorship link ups that have gone very wrong as the celebrity changes their image). Learners add their findings under the appropriate poster.
- Ask learners to add additional information to each poster about how important it is and the positive impacts it can have, as well as the negative ones already considered. Debate and discuss why these are so important for organisations and how they can add value to or remove value from their organisation.

Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

- Unit 1: The Travel and Tourism Industry
- Unit 2: Worldwide Travel and Tourism Destination
- Unit 4: Customer Service in Travel and Tourism
- Unit 11: Events, Conferences and Exhibitions for the Travel and Tourism Industry

Employer involvement

This unit would benefit, where feasible, from employer involvement in the form of:

- work experience
- visits to relevant visitor attractions
- talks by specialist guest speakers.

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC International Level 3 Qualification in Travel and Tourism. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Websites

Learners will need to make extensive use of local, national and international websites when researching individual attractions of their choice.

- Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) – useful for learning aim C
- British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions (BALPPA) – useful for learning aim C
- Chessington World of Adventures – useful for learning aim C
- Galactica Tours – webpage for new ride at Alton Towers – useful for learning aim A
- Disneyland Paris – useful for learning aims B and C
- Geography Fieldwork – search for ‘Barcelona Field Studies Centre/Tourism Multiplier Effect’ – multiplier effect diagram (useful for learning aim A)
- VisitBritain/England – search for ‘annual survey of visits to visitor attractions latest results’ for (useful for learning aim C)

Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling learners to access them through the school/college intranet.